

REPORT ON THE CIA LIBRARY ACQUISITIONS PROGRAM

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25X1A5a1 This report is submitted in response to the request of [REDACTED]

The need for such a

study became apparent during the January, 1959 Chicago meeting of the [REDACTED] in the 25X1A5a1

course of discussion following the presentation by [REDACTED] speaking 25X1A9a

for the CIA. Questions requiring more detailed information were neatly summarized

in [REDACTED] letter of instruction in six areas as follows:

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1. Acquisition policies.
2. Geographical areas and subject covered.
3. Nature of materials received.
4. Manner of disposal of publications not retained by CIA.
5. Probable overlapping with [REDACTED] receipts.
6. To what extent American libraries might be able to depend upon the CIA for current publications.

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These areas have been examined and have inevitably led to a few additional related questions which will appear at the conclusion of this report.

To look into these matters, the dates of September 14-17, were agreed upon by all concerned and the principals of CIA, from [REDACTED] on through 25X1A9a all members of the library staff involved were more than generous with their time and efforts to aid this inquiry. Among those who were most generous, in order of consultation, were:

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1. [REDACTED] Deputy Assistant Director, Office of the Assistant Director for Central Reference.
2. [REDACTED] Librarian, CIA.
3. [REDACTED] Chief Reference Librarian, CIA Library.
4. [REDACTED] Chief, Acquisitions Branch, CIA Library.
5. Mr. Leo Goodman, Chief, Division of Intelligence Collection and Distribution, Bureau of Intelligence and Research, Department of State.
6. Dr. Luther H. Evans, Senior Consultant, Federal Library Survey.
7. Mr. Lewis Coffin, Assistant Director, Processing Department, Library of Congress.
8. Mr. Fred Shipman, Librarian, Department of State.

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In addition to these principals, many others were called upon, either momentarily or for extended labors in the interest of this report, and their assistance is here most gratefully acknowledged.

### Historical Background

The CIA Library was established in 1947, beginning with a modest collection comprising the library of the former Office of Emergency Management. As the reference and circulating materials in the new library expanded to meet the requirements of CIA, a new system of classification evolved, and new methods of storage and retrieval were devised. The intense interest of this library in the area of information handling arises from its responsibility for providing central Agency storage and reference facilities for all intelligence information received. In addition to this charge, the CIA Library must develop and maintain indexes and bibliographies of intelligence materials, and it has the function of obtaining, providing, and servicing all pertinent open literature. The present CIA Collection numbers approximately 10,000 reference titles and 82,000 circulating titles representing close to 190,000 volumes. The new central physical facility now under construction for CIA will provide space for a maximum total collection of 300,000 volumes. Since 1953, the CIA Library, in addition to the usual methods of acquisitions, maintains the Washington headquarters for the foreign procurement program

25X1X1 [REDACTED]. The Library's Acquisitions Branch thus acts as the ordering mechanism not only for its own Agency requirements but also for those of some twenty other U.S. Government agencies [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

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### Acquisitions Policy

In discussing Acquisitions Policy, it must be clearly understood that the CIA Library by its very nature does not lend itself to fixed policy; on the contrary, it must be ever ready to meet swiftly changing requirements with fast changes in acquisitions policy. However, certain fairly stable lines can be drawn, and they are documented at least once a year in The Annual Statement of Requirements.<sup>1</sup>

1. Exhibit I. Statement of Requirements for Publications...

For our purposes, we can narrow the whole field of Acquisitions policy considerably. First, an immediate distinction must be made between Intelligence Data (closed literature) and books, periodicals, and newspapers (open literature). Acquisitions Policy concerns both, but only the latter concerns us. A second distinction must be made within open literature between what is retained for library use (CIA Library), and what material is redistributed (Service to Agency personnel and other U.S. Agencies). For purposes of this study, a third category of material must be considered; that is, material which is later redistributed, having served its purpose under one or two above, or having proved to be unwanted or duplicated.

The category of material retained derives from the most positive aspects of the Acquisition Policy. This material is received mainly through the instrument of the "Statement of Requirements" which is reviewed regularly and issued

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. In the copy attached as Exhibit I, the CIA Library's requirements are represented in Enclosure A, sections I A to I J and II-B, and in Enclosure B.

Briefly summarized, the principal areas of subject interest are those which represent elements of power, i.e. Economics, Politics and International Relations, Scientific and technical advances affecting power, Psychological warfare and Strategic Intelligence. Reference requirements in these areas have led to a heavy concentration on directories of all kinds, statistical compendia, handbooks, manuals, yearbooks, guides, directories, gazetteers, etc. The first major factor then derives from the specific subject areas of interest within the CIA.

A second major factor affecting the Acquisitions Policy is geographical or political, as you wish, but depends upon the geographic areas of current intelligence interest. The agency's field of endeavor dictates heavy emphasis on the geographic areas where immediacy and completeness of information is critical to the successful prosecution of foreign policy. At the present time and for obvious

reasons, the emphasis is on Soviet Bloc nations; all others are graded downward in a priority order established by those most closely concerned. World-wide coverage is maintained, but the depth and breadth of coverage vary considerably.

The third factor which has important bearing on the Acquisitions policy is time. In fact, there are two time factors. The first has to do with immediacy; a very considerable portion of material acquired has its greatest importance in that it must be in hand a few days after publication. Beyond this, there is a general continuing clearing of the whole library collection of outdated material, leaving as working material only current and recent titles.

The net result of constant application of the above three factors is a collection fundamentally different from those of most libraries. While others cling to stable collections and grow without end, the CIA Library practices a planned instability, changing its directions as intelligence needs dictate; it constantly reduces out, in order to remain agile and free of encumbrance in its areas of primary interest.

#### Acquisitions Practices

The basic tool in the acquisitions program of the CIA Library is the Statement of Requirements mentioned above. This 17-page document describes in detail subject areas and types of publications desired by four major using agencies, in-

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This is followed by distribution of materials received under blanket or specific instructions for other agencies. And finally, benefiting by the bibliographic information and availability for review of all this material passing through, the CIA Library forms and reforms its own holdings.

This leads us to outgoing materials. This same system, but in reverse, is also served in the Acquisitions Branch. Since many of the items disseminated, as indicated above, are for temporary use, there is a constant flowback of sizeable proportions. The disposal of this material will be discussed later under the heading Redistribution.

Volume and Character of Acquisitions

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It will be remembered that the numbers cited [REDACTED] in reporting CIA's acquisitions (200,000 pieces per month) appeared to be astronomically high. When all types of material are considered the numbers are formidable. When the closed literature is subtracted, since it is neither available

25X1A5a1 or of interest to the [REDACTED], the numbers are not so formidable.

When one considers the actual statistical count of open literature materials received via CIA channels described above, the number still looms large. Monographic literature, the type of material we are concerned with, reaches approximately 8,000 items per month; this kind of number is not beyond our own experience.

25X1X1 The 1 July 1958 - 30 June 1959 statistics of the Acquisitions Branch of the 25X1X1 CIA Library show a total of 97,033 monographic items received, [REDACTED]

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A matter of importance to this study is found in the ratio of duplication to total input. An estimated 80 per cent of the 97,033 figure can be attributed to receipts of additional copies, both planned and incidental. While this kind of ratio might give a typical [REDACTED] member apoplexy in his particular domain, there are valid and cogent reasons for it in the CIA pattern. First, there will obviously be considerable duplication arising from the use of blanket instructions to personnel in the field. Against this kind of duplication, the urgencies of time are such that it is believed wise to risk duplication rather than be behind. Further, studies have demonstrated that it is usually cheaper to duplicate than to try to verify before purchase. Second, in certain areas, duplication is deliberately calculated to establish three or four, or even more sources since overnight several of these sources of critical material may be closed out. In some cases, materials are obtained through channels quite remote from the source, when they cannot be 25X1X1 had any other way. An example may be in point. [REDACTED]

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And finally, in many instances, the agency will have many persons in the same subject area all needing similar materials; thus, some newspapers, journals, or even monographs, may be acquired in numerous copies. The requirements of CIA are such that books are frequently acquired in multiple copies, many purchased on an expend-

able basis for the exclusive use of the research analyst. Of the 8,000 monographs received monthly, not more than 10 per cent may be added to the Library's collections. Most of the multiple copies are later redistributed.

The experience of CIA in the field of foreign acquisitions is of considerable importance and should be utilized insofar as it is available [REDACTED] 25X1A5a1  
Specific recommendations will be made toward this end. It has been clearly demonstrated that commercial sources alone are not adequate, either for monographs or serial publications. Important considerations are cash in hand to lay on the barrel-head, and personal contacts. [REDACTED]

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#### Redistribution

Materials available for redistribution out of CIA represent three principal sources. The first of these includes all materials currently received which are unwanted by CIA. These are often duplications derived from multiple sources and blanket instructions, or even initial copies of materials not needed or pertinent to current or prospective interests. A second category is made up of the multitude of items returned following use by research personnel of CIA. In most cases, ephemeral material is not returned at all, but there is a steady flow in large numbers of material no longer needed internally. These items are made available for redistribution. The third group includes all those items withdrawn from the CIA Library's collections as out of date, out of interest, or unwanted for any reason.

A better understanding of the importance of this distribution may be gathered from some statistics. One figure was cited as an approximate over-all number of



items in the open literature received, 2,400,000 per year. Taking our currently active geographic area as an example, Mainland China, analysis of the area total reveals more specific data. For the year 1 July 1958 to 30 June 1959, a total number of 48,554 pieces were received from all sources of Mainland China publications. Of this number, 34,090 were newspaper issues, 10,264 were periodical issues, and 4,200 were books.

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Before leaving the subject of redistribution, special attention should be given to the primary geographic interests of CIA, as well as the general scope of redistribution. The general pattern can be recorded statistically very briefly. Some 5,000 items a month are turned over to L.C. by the CIA Acquisitions Branch. This number includes any or all of the types of material mentioned above. Three special categories require additional consideration. One large bloc of materials represents the U.S.S.R. The CIA publishes The Russian Book List, usually once a month, listing every Russian book which passes through the operation, regardless of eventual location. The issue attached<sup>6</sup> list 927 items which indicates an annual rate of possibly 10 to 12,000 items. This list is made available to all interested government agencies and in this way maximum distribution of bibliographic information is assured. L.C. can compare this list with the holdings of its Slavic Project and any government agency can obtain a copy, if not the original of any item listed. Another large group involves materials received from Eastern European countries. For these, CIA sends an information copy of data on each to the Eastern European Accessions Index in The Library of Congress, so that again bibliographic control, and at least in the Washington area, availability is assured. Oriental language materials comprise the final group of this class. These do not receive comparable informational publicity, but are serviced primarily for internal use, then redis-

6. Exhibit VI, Russian Book List, 8 August 1959.

tributed in massive lots through L.C.; Korean, Mongolian, Tibetan, and Urdu are typical of this class. These are very closely controlled, since they are extremely difficult to obtain and equally specialized in purpose.

The above pattern leaves very considerable gaps. CIA does not report its holdings to the Union Catalog. Soviet bloc materials are reported in various ways, but this information is not readily accessible outside of Washington. There is no cumulation of the monthlies for Russian and East European indexes. Oriental languages are not reported. In fact, if they were reported, their ready availability is questionable. In terms of a direct request from outside the government, CIA material is not available. L.C. or another government agency may request a loan or copy from CIA, and it will be furnished as time permits, but it is always understood that CIA's first responsibility is to Agency personnel and it has no direct service to a general public. These are the basic facts which in sum dictate the redistribution policy of CIA. It holds only what it needs, strictly limits its take by interest, geographic, and time factors, and purges itself constantly of all excess. It then points to L.C. for next steps. It might be wise to take a look there at these materials in the process of redistribution and their effects upon the library world, at least the Federal library world.

Any inquiry into the eventual destination of materials received in the Library of Congress leaves one with the uneasy impression of a bottomless pit. On the one hand CIA unquestionably acquires important quantities of difficult materials, rapidly sorts its take and does an especially good job of informing others in certain areas. On the other, when their surpluses are passed on through L.C., relatively few are retained. Most are already listed, available, or of no interest to L.C., which disposes of the balance in the most expedient manner. Enterprising librarians are invited to inspect and select; certain types of materials are sold to the highest bidder in job lots. While this may seem impersonal and free-wheeling, consider the scope of their problem. CIA sends in approximately 60,000 pieces

annually. L.C. receives some 1,000,000 pieces annually as gifts. 400,000 items come in annually by exchange from government institutions, scientific and learned societies and academic institutions. Between two and a half to three million pieces are received by transfer from U.S. Government Agencies each year. CIA falls into this last group. The only point in citing these enormous numbers is to place CIA's part in proper context, and then to point out the ultimate target, all Federal Libraries and a national acquisitions plan. We may all hope for some light in a rather dark picture through the current investigation of Federal Libraries led by Luther H. Evans. The fact is that redistribution by CIA to L.C. of its surplus material serves only one assured function, that of improving the Library of Congress insofar as new titles are found and missing issues of newspapers and journals turn up. Following this screening, what happens to the remainder is only a little better than happenstance, depending on who happens by and their stance in handling large quantities of unsorted material. This problem of redistribution is a difficult one, and a proper concern of FP Libraries, but it is essentially not a problem for CIA.

#### Conclusions and Recommendations

While the above account cannot include all of the details which might tell a better story of the important work of the CIA Library, many of its activities must remain unknown for a variety of reasons and have little bearing upon the interests of this study. Enough of the story has been told to reveal answers to the fundamental questions [REDACTED]

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It seems obvious that the collections representing the CIA Library in a general sense are not to be considered available for current or active use outside of CIA. Thus, to the extent that [REDACTED] may contemplate immediate availability, the CIA Library must not be counted in. On the other hand, since their concept of collections is one of change, and since any change results in redistribution, it would appear that eventual availability of every-

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thing in the open literature will be in the public service somewhere. If this

idea has force, it must be modified by complete understanding of the narrow limits imposed upon the CIA collections by its mission, limits of subject fields, geographic area, and time. In addition to this, there remains a very serious and massive problem in the matter of terminal redistribution of all excess materials in the Federal system. Most libraries in the Washington area, including CIA, evade this issue by simple transfer to the Library of Congress. The issue is one which will have to be faced by Dr. Luther Evans in his survey of Federal Libraries.

25X1A5a1 To turn to more positive possibilities [REDACTED] 25X1A5a1

[REDACTED], it is clear that CIA, [REDACTED] 25X1X1

[REDACTED] has developed a network or system of

25X1X1 foreign acquisitions whose by-products, at least, should be of great value to

25X1A5a1 [REDACTED] libraries. [REDACTED]

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One valuable benefit which derives from CIA's key position in foreign acquisitions can and should be made available [REDACTED]; this is the dissemination of foreign sources current status information. Recently [REDACTED] made a personal survey of Italian book sources<sup>7</sup> which cast new light on the publishing and book-selling trades in that country. In the interests of their own acquisition program, the Acquisitions Branch of CIA receives, analyzes and utilizes a continuous flow of information from the field which, if properly distributed would be very helpful to any library engaged in foreign acquisitions, even on a modest scale.

7. Exhibit VII. Survey of publications availabilities in northern Italy. 1959

25X1A5a1 It would appear that [redacted] benefits already by information concerning Soviet and East European materials reporting to a central publication source to which most of us subscribe. However, it must be remembered that the CIA Acquisitions policy is dictated by current international policy interests and the permanency

25X1A5a1 of the [redacted] cannot be assured for any country's products under such volatile possibilities of changing direction.

It is via this urgency for currency that another by-product benefit comes which can and should be made available to a broader public than it now serves. In the due course of its work and utilizing to the fullest the great potentialities of air transport and official pouch movement, the Reference Branch of the CIA Library produces a steady flow of bibliographies which could be extremely useful to [redacted] 25X1A5a

25X1A5a1 [redacted] libraries. Since by definition the areas of subject interest of CIA are often those where Acquisitions are most difficult, close study of bibliographies covering those areas will provide valuable guidance to libraries [redacted] concerned 25X1A5a1 with those areas. Even more, the items listed are often available elsewhere in Washington, and if CIA holds the only copy, LC can readily borrow it, at least for long enough to make photocopy. CIA itself is not authorized to publicize or distribute its work to a general public. It may be possible to obtain some dissemination of this material thru authorized State Department channels. Every encouragement should be given toward this end. Typical titles of these bibliographies are the following:

Political trends in emergent Asian countries.	200 items
Islam in Communist countries.	105 items
Underdeveloped areas: Africa, Near East, Southeast Asia	147 items
Coexistence and Soviet economic penetration of underdeveloped countries	205 items
Malaya and Singapore	67 items

25X1X1 The urgency of CIA's informational needs [redacted] 25X1X1  
[redacted] yields another potential source of useful bibliographic information. CIA receives a large number of initial issues or sample copies of new

serial publications almost as rapidly as they are produced in all countries of the world. Again, the geographic coverage is influenced by CIA's area interests. In any case, this is one area which goes unreported, perhaps for lack of interest indicated from outside. Many titles of this kind do not appear in the Monthly List of New Serial Titles or elsewhere, and might well be of great value beyond CIA. It would probably not be difficult to obtain reporting of such titles, if not photocopy of the sample issue if this were desired.

Another area where lack of reporting was noted is the relatively modest but conceivably very critical percentage of unique titles held in the CIA Library. This Library currently does not report to the National Union Catalog. Although the Soviet and East European titles are reported elsewhere, there are many useful titles in other languages which should be reported regularly to the Union Catalog. Although use of the material is restricted, bibliographic information is not. A problem of catalog maintenance would come out of the continued change in holdings, but reasonable solutions can surely be found. Some useful additions to the national bibliography would certainly be won if the CIA Library could be encouraged to participate in the National Union Catalog.

25X1A5a1 The major question in the minds of all of us has to do with possible overlapping of acquisitions [REDACTED]. It now seems clear that if there is overlapping, the range is very small, and for the most part it is temporary since much of it will be turned back into public channels later. Furthermore, CIA would consider any overlapping of very small importance when compared with the requirements of their mission. What they hold and use currently is imperative in their work and its procurement for their sole use may well be essential. [REDACTED]

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25X1A5a1 In conclusion, I should like to say that although this library is not an  
[redacted] type operation (or, in fact, like any other library-type) its acquisitions  
program should be more widely known and better understood. Many misconceptions  
of the library are allied with popular misinformation about the parent Agency.  
In recent months every portent has indicated a freer flow of information and  
eagerness to participate in the increasing exchange of technical and bibliographic  
25X1A5a1 data. Both the [redacted] and CIA Library personnel deserve rich commendation  
for their awareness of this change and their initiative in facing the issues.

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[redacted]  
October 15, 1959

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